



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

by virtue of the position to which he is called, is able to exert the influence, socially and otherwise, which the world has come to expect from those who follow the professions. In each of the professions there is a steady tendency to raise the standard of general education for admission to the schools. This is a phase of the subject which each school must work out for itself, but when once this cultural foundation is laid, when once one has reached the adequate measure of liberal education which is deemed fitting for the collegiates, then one begins the study of his vocation.

Now this may sound like abstract theory, but I cannot help feeling that it underlies the entire range of vocational education for the future. First, the exercise of the selective element, then the setting of proper foundations of culture appropriate to the calling, then within the calling the combination of acquisition of practical knowledge and the study of all that contributes so essentially to the enriching of life and to the full and prolonged exercise of the calling itself.

In all the professions we are going through a pretty rapid evolution. Old standards are giving way to new. More and more we are coming to appreciate—not merely for the sake of the worker but for the sake of society which that work is to serve—the desirability of broad equipment. In no profession, I suppose, has a finer spirit of devotion been shown than in that of nursing. In the olden days when we had no science, no accumulated knowledge, the tender touch and the fine sympathy and the painstaking ministrations of the nurse represented the maximum contribution possible to human service, but to-day we should say that, supplementing that fine sentiment and fine devotion, the person who undertakes to follow the career of nursing without a grasp of the accumulated knowledge which the world has put at our disposal would be falling far short of any reasonable measure of human service.

---

## THE CASE METHOD OF TEACHING NURSING

By SARA E. PARSONS, R.N.  
Massachusetts General Hospital

DR. GEORGE S. C. BADGER has used the case method for several years at the Massachusetts General Hospital in teaching nurses. Twice a week he takes a group of nurses to the wards and divides them among the patients whom he has previously selected as subjects. Without reference to the clinical charts the nurses are expected to note

all the objective symptoms of disease, to feel the pulse, and to be ready to tell Dr. Badger what they have seen. He quizzes them as to the possible significance of their observations and later gives them a lecture on the cases thus studied. These clinics are a most interesting, stimulating part of the curriculum.

Another adaptation of the case method was suggested to me one day when talking with Miss Ida Cannon of the Social Service Department. She was speaking of its use in law, medicine, and social training. I determined to get material as soon as possible and try it out on my seniors as a preparation for private duty nursing. The care of the patient is not the problem that confronts the well-prepared nurse in private practice. What puzzles and sometimes confounds her is the attending circumstances with which she must cope, and these are of such diversity that the ordinary hospital instruction is quite an inadequate preparation. Indeed, one actually hesitates to tell the innocent pupil the problems that may confront her and thus possibly frighten her or make too conspicuous certain phases of nursing life. The interest manifested by the class in these lessons and their real value leads me to tell of the experiment.

Several nurses who have had considerable experience in private work were kind enough to furnish me with descriptions of a number of situations in which they found themselves that involved some problems either professional, financial or moral. They would also state how they had dealt with the situation and what was to be learned from it. At class I would read a few of these cases to the nurses, who would write them down. They were instructed to consider them during the following week, and certain nurses were told to come to the next recitation prepared to discuss them. The next week these members of the class told how they would deal with such situations, and an open discussion would follow. The instructor ended the discussion by demonstrating why certain suggestions were fallacious or unethical and why others were worthy of commendation. The cases brought out the unexpected professional difficulties as well as the moral aspect of many of the unusual situations in which nurses may be placed.

Following are a few of the actual cases presented:

"If taking care of a patient where you have been invited to eat with the family, what would you do when you know that they are to have guests in for dinner?"

"What would you do if called on a case as second nurse and found a nurse already on the case who you knew had been dismissed from a training school for the offence of stealing?"

"What would you do in taking care of a surgical case in the country, an operation having been performed by a surgeon from the city, who left definite orders with you as to the after care of the patient, but did not have an understanding with the family doctor, who, in his turn, gave you orders quite contrary to those of the surgeon?"

"If you had been caring for a male patient in his own home and the doctor advised him to go to some resort for convalescence, and it was not convenient for the patient's wife, mother or sister to accompany you and the patient, what would you do?"

"If called to a woman who had an incurable cancer, unable to be moved from her bed, a question of only a few weeks before she must die, the patient dependent entirely upon her two sons, ordinary laboring men, for support, reserve funds exhausted by long illness, doctors' and nurses' bills, patient's room and bed in a filthy condition and alive with vermin, what would you do?"

The result of these lessons was to impress me very keenly with the great need of them. Most of the class were wholly unprepared for the ethical solutions of the different situations, although they had had an excellent course of lectures on private nursing.

They had been so thoroughly imbued with the obedient attitude of the necessity of always doing what they were asked to do, that it was a revelation to learn that they must be prepared under certain circumstances to protect themselves and their reputations. Being brought face to face with so many situations that nurses had been obliged to meet and manage alone, the pupils must have been impressed with the fact that when they leave the shelter of the hospital they cannot count on anyone's protection. They are launched into a community where each member is usually looking after his own interests, and the nurse will have need of all the wisdom that she may have acquired to solve her own problems.

---

## THE ORIGIN AND DIGNITY OF TRAINED NURSING \*

By FRANK B. SANBORN  
Concord, Mass.

"THE Origin and Dignity of Trained Nursing" is no new topic to me, for nearly forty years ago, being then a member of the old Board of State Charities, I was asked by the two ladies who originated the

---

\* Address delivered to the nurses of Danvers Hospital, Hathorne, Mass., June 30, 1911.